Educational Heterogamy and the Division of Paid Labour in the Family: A Comparison of Present-day Belgium and Sweden

Mieke C.W. Eeckhaut*, Maria A. Stanfors** & Bart Van de Putte*

*Department of Sociology, Ghent University **Center for Economic Demography, Lund University

Introduction

Family as unit of analysis

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Individual as unit of analysis

↓

Individual- and partner effects

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This study:

Individual-, partner-, and **couple effects** on the division of paid labour in the family

Educational Heterogamy
Presence of (Young) Children

↓

Belgium
Conservative welfare state
→ Male breadwinner model

Sweden
Social democratic welfare state
→ Dual-earner family

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Relative Female Labour Market Participation

Hypotheses

Educational Heterogamy & Relative Female Labour Market Participation:

Specialization Hypothesis

Education ♂<♀ >> Education ♂=♀ >> Education ♂>♀

Gender Identity Hypothesis

Education ♂<♀ << Education ♂=♀ = Education ♂>♀

The Presence of (Young) Children & Relative Female Labour Market Participation:

Direct Child Effect Hypothesis

♀child <6 years << ♀child 6-18 years << ♀no dependent child

Indirect Child Effect Hypothesis

Specialization Effect

♀child <6 years << ♀child 6-18 years << ♀no dependent child

Gender Identity Effect

♀child <6 years >> ♀child 6-18 years >> ♀no dependent child

Method

Pooled cross-sectional data **EU-SILC 2004-2008**
2,592 Belgian and **3,348 Swedish** couples

Independent Variables:
- Education man & woman (5 cat.)
- Educational heterogamy (educ. man-woman)
- Presence of (young) children (3 cat.)

Dependent Variables:
- Woman's share of couple working hours (4 cat.)

Control Variables:
- Age man & woman (in years)
- Age man & woman squared (in years)
- Degree of urbanization (3 cat.)

Multinomial Logistic Diagonal Reference Models:
1. Baseline Model + Control Variables
2. + Presence of (Young) Children
   + Educational Heterogamy

$$\Theta_{ijs} = p * \mu_{iis} + (1-p) * \mu_{jjs} + \Sigma\, \beta_l * X_{ijl} + \sum \beta_c * X_{ijc} + \sum \beta_h * H_{ijh} + \varepsilon_{ijs}$$

$$B_{ijsk} = \frac{\exp(\Theta_{ijs})}{\sum \exp(\Theta_{ijs})}$$

Parameter Estimates for the Diagonal Reference Model with Control Variables, the Presence of Young Children, and Educational Heterogamy, for Woman's Share of Couple Working Hours (ref.cat. 41-59%)

	Odds for the Presence of (Young) Children and Educational Heterogamy											
	Belgium						Sweden					
	0%		1-40%		41-59%	>59%	0%		1-40%		41-59%	>59%	
$b_{\text{child 6-18y}}$	2.481	*	1.740	*	1	1.064	2.143	*	1.653	*	1	1.566	*
$b_{\text{child <6y}}$	3.858	*	2.540	*	1	1.660	9.929	*	1.868	*	1	2.179	*
$b_{\text{heterogamy}}$	1.014		0.993		1	0.888	1.392	*	1.184		1	1.000	
N	2,254						3,224						

Note: The odds for the homogamous couples and the control variables are omitted from this table.
*$p < 0.05$.

Results

Education & Relative Female Labour Market Participation:

Belgium: Strong positive link (exception: >59%)
Education ♀ is 29.3 times more important than education ♂

Sweden: Strong positive link (exception: >59%)
Education ♀ is 3.6 times more important than education ♂

Educational Heterogamy & Relative Female Labour Market Participation:

Belgium: No heterogamy effect

Sweden: Specialization effect (limited to binary choice: 0% vs. 41-59%)

The Presence of (Young) Children & Relative Female Labour Market Participation:

Belgium: Higher odds of working 0% and 1-40%
No interaction effect

Sweden: Higher odds of working 0%, 1-40%, **and** >59%
Specialization ♀no dependent child >> Specialization ♀child <6 years

Discussion

Couple Effects?

Educational Heterogamy:

Very limited (!)
→ only specialization effect for not-working vs. working in Sweden

↔ Stong effect of education (especially in Belgium)

The Presence of (Young) Children:

Strong **direct** effect
→ especially of children <6 years on not-working in Sweden
→ in Sweden: also positive odds for working >59% of couple working hours

Limited **indirect** effect
→ in Sweden: Specialization ♀no dependent child >> Specialization ♀child <6 years

Mieke.Eeckhaut@UGent.be